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Honors Humanities

Mrs. Goodrich

The Alchemist Summary # 2

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Santiago has been working for a while at the crystal shop for the merchant and he is not very pleased with the tedious work. He wants to increase the rate of business so that he can make more money so he can get to the pyramids faster. He brings up the idea to the merchant about building a display case outside of the shop but the merchant is afraid that people will knock into it and make it fall over. Santiago explains that he is trying to follow his personal legend and eventually the merchant explains that he used to be like that. His dream has been to visit Mecca but never went because then he would have nothing to live for. After a long conversation, he agrees to build the display case. Business increases and Santiago feels as though he will have the money to go to Tarifa in no time. Santiago overhears people about there being nothing to drink in the shopping area so the merchant agrees to let Santiago sell tea in the shop. It is a huge success and eventually the merchant has to hire more people. In about a year of time working at the crystal shop he gets enough money to go to Tarifa and informs the merchant that he is going to leave and urges him to do the same and visit Mecca. The merchant decides not to go but Santiago leaves anyway.

Santiago is awaiting a caravan that he is going to join in his travels across the dessert. He meets an Englishman awaiting the caravan as well. He is very into his books of which he studies alchemy. The Englishman also is very quiet and comes across as rude. So Santiago does not warm up to him at first. Santiago makes friends with the camel driver who he finds out has been to Mecca and then felt happy to die a man. He had an orchard that got ruined by a flood so now he is a camel driver for the caravan. Santiago explains his story of going to the pyramids but is interrupted by men in hoods who warn the driver of marauders in the dessert who will rob them of the camel and possessions. So they are forced to not light fires at night and must sleep with the camel to stay warm. One night Santiago goes to the Englishman and is intrigued by alchemy and the Englishman explains that it is all centered around this concept of “The Soul of The World”. Santiago borrows some of the books and begins to read up on it. Then they get word of a war raging in the dessert but they get to an oasis just in time to evade the war.

The Alchemist watches as the caravan arrives in Al-Fayoum (the oasis). Omens have told him that someone important is going to come and see him. The driver tells them that they will stay in the oasis because it is a safe place to stay and they will stay there till the war ends. Santiago has to stay in a tent with some other people and tells his story of where he is traveling and why. The next morning the Englishman wants Santiago to search for the alchemist with him. Santiago does but they have no luck finding anyone who knows where he lives. Then he stops by a well and asks a young lady by the name of Fatima who says the Alchemist lives in the southern part of the oasis. The Englishman disappears to go find the alchemist and Fatima leaves but Santiago cannot because he is in love with this new girl. Santiago returns the next day to the well and finds the Englishman standing there and he explains that he met the alchemist and asked him how to turn lead into gold and the alchemist said to just try. The Englishman was upset by the simplicity of the answer. Fatima arrives and Santiago tells her that he is in love with her and she explains that she has been waiting for him for a long time but he has to continue to follow his personal legend. Santiago goes to find the Englishman and finds that he has built a furness to try and find a way to turn lead into gold.